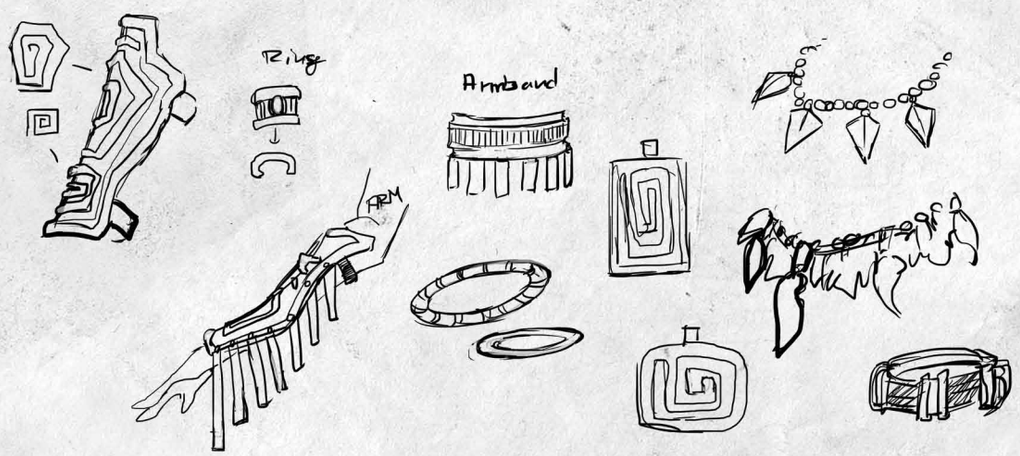
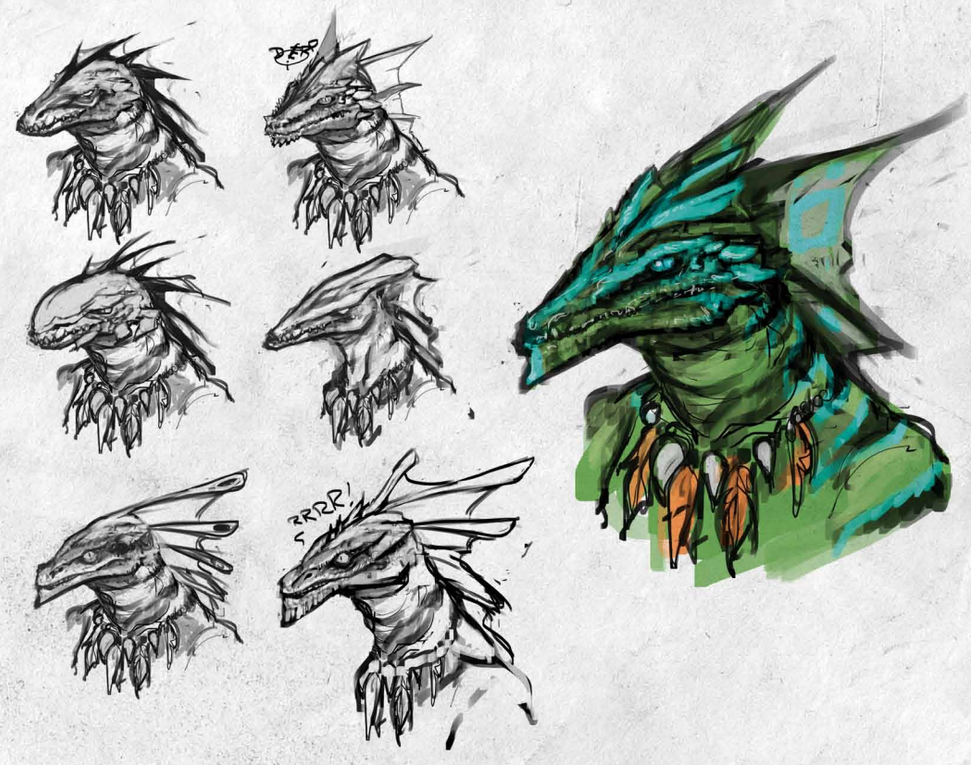
THE ART OF






Ring
Armband
ARM


RRRR!

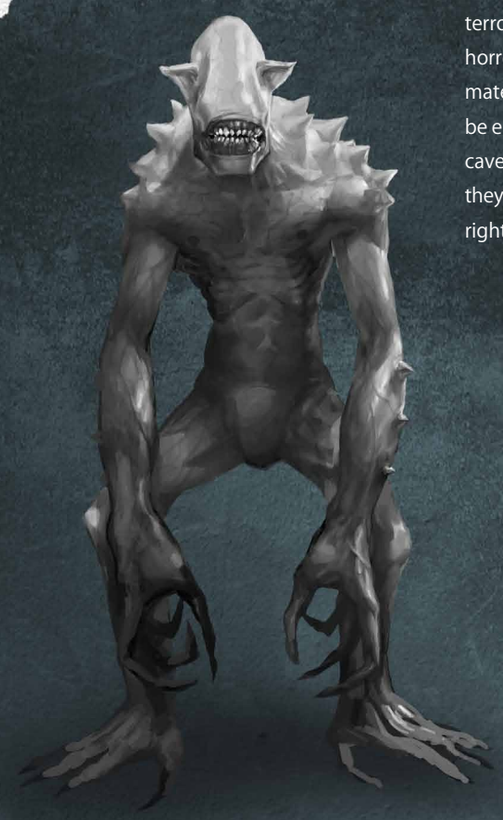






Ghoul

According to the Pen & Paper rules, anyone who encounters a ghoul for the first time, must make a modified Courage check, or otherwise be frozen in terror. Now all we had to do was to give this pure horror a visual shape. In contrast to the source-material-ghouls, Blackguards-ghouls can not only be encountered on graveyards, but also in remote caverns and deep dungeons. As darkness-dwellers, they rely on sound and smell. So, no need for eyes, right?





Cave Dragon

Fornonfur, the cave dragon adorns the Blackguards Logo. So it might sound strange that our initial inspirations for him were a mole and a sand puppy. The former lend us its shovel-like claws, the other the pale albino skin, befitting a creature living a subterranean life. And just like a mole, Fornonfur can't see all that well. What he lacks in eyesight, though, he compensates through excellent hearing and smell. He'll know if some ragtag adventurers want to steal his treasure.



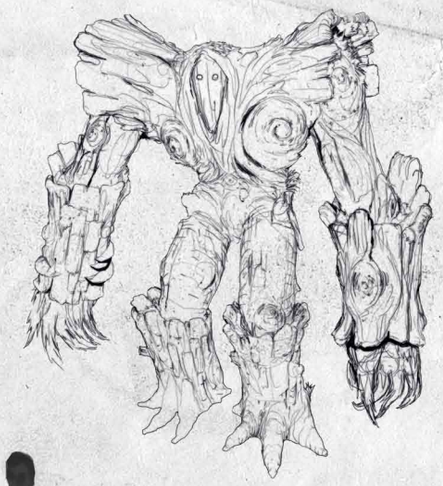


Crypt Louse

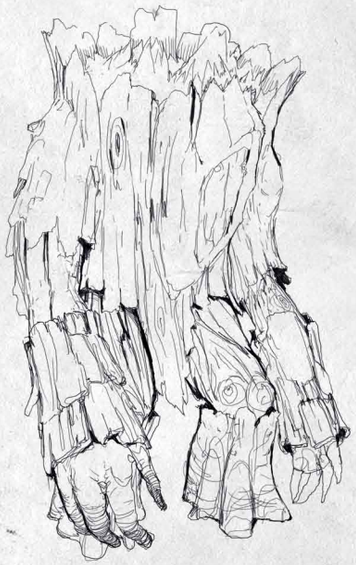
The grinning crypt louse was the team's underdog-love. Accordingly, crypt lice slippers and a screaming crypt-louse-plushy were in high demand. The little crawler was one of our first 3D creatures and was thus abused as a frequent placeholder by our game designers.





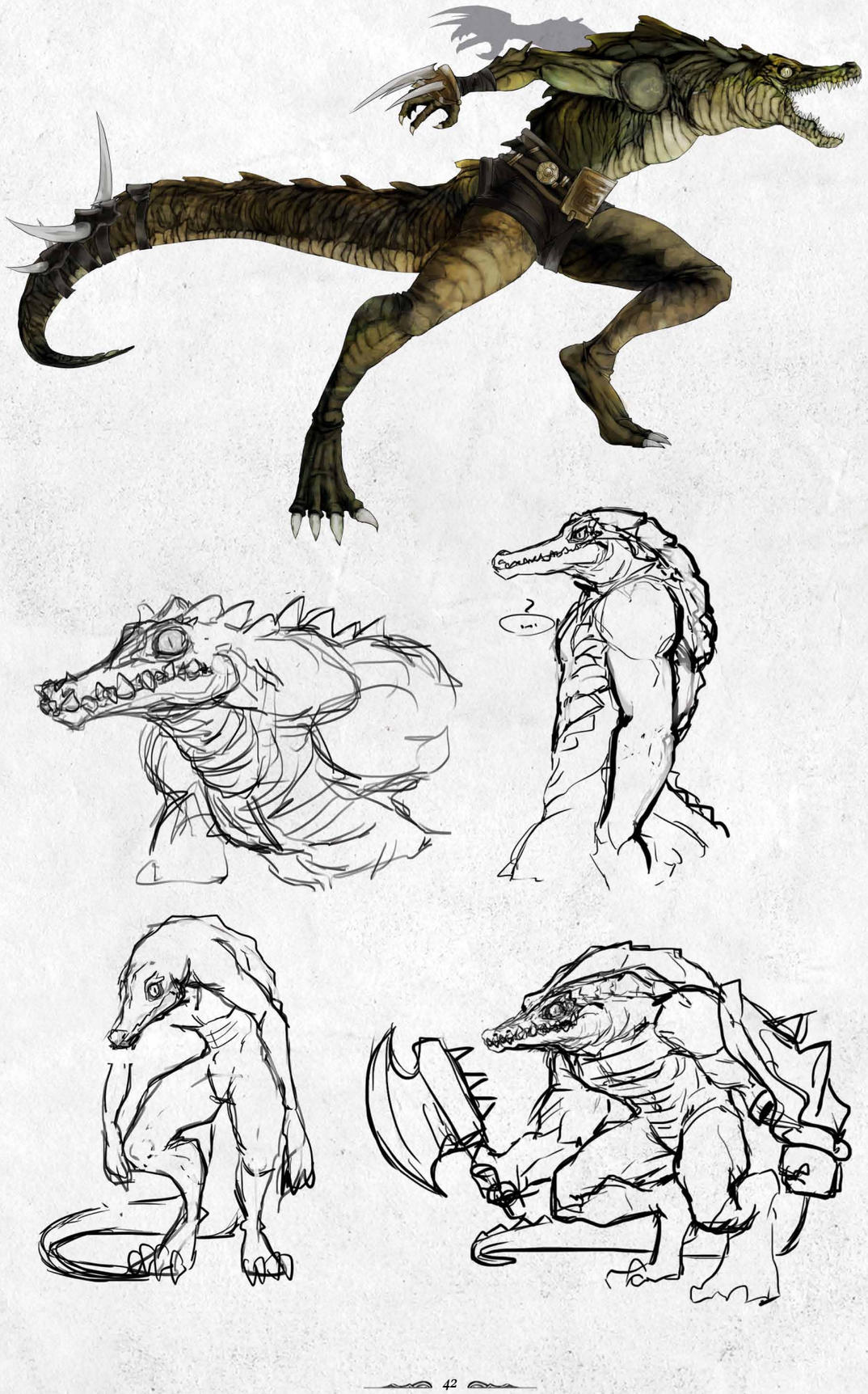






Wood Troll

The wood troll is a good example for things working great in the books, but that are challenging to implement in a game. The source material describes a wood troll as a silent hunter, setting up ambushes for any who dare to harm the forest. Now you have a hulking treant-creature that moves in silence and is perfectly camouflaged...yeah, sounds like a glitch if you have this on screen, right?
So, the earth shattering attacks of our troll didn't turn out that subtle.



Maru

Another instance, where sourcebooks and video game clash: the maru. According to descriptions, these lizardfolk-relatives have very short arms (think T-Rex), yet they're dual wielding heavy sabers. Imagine fighting animations for a creature like this. Not very intimidating, is it? Thus, the arms of our marus are a good deal longer, but they still look unimpressive compared to their large hunches and massive thighs.





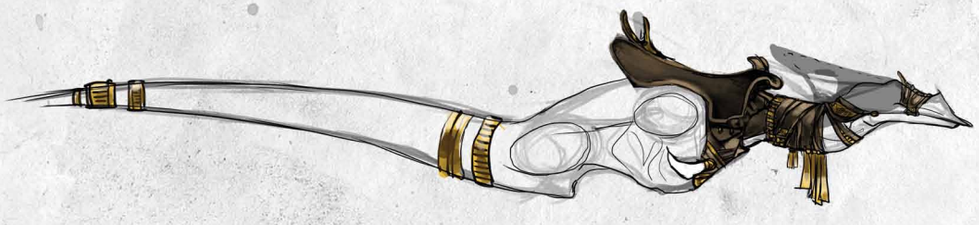
Black Ogre

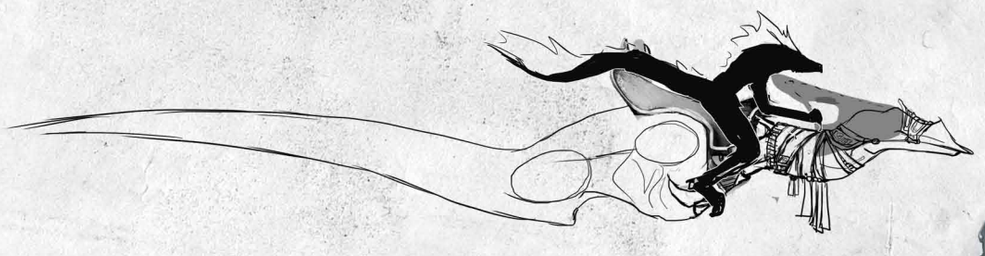
'Terror of the Forests', that's what they're called. Black ogres are considerably less dim-witted than their pale northern counterparts. They are able to tracelessly stalk through the forest. This advantage however, falls flat in Blackguards, as black ogres are mainly encountered in arenas across the game.

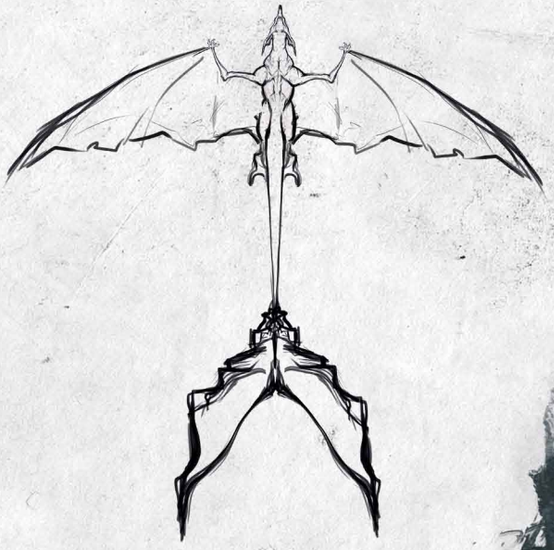
Flying Lizard

The flying lizard is an Achaz mount. Originally, we wanted to go for canopy dragons in their stead. These are small dragons with a magpie attitude (they're always after the shinies). But after lizard people became more important to the story it was a natural decision to let go of the dragons and bring in the flying lizards. It's also a lot less corny.

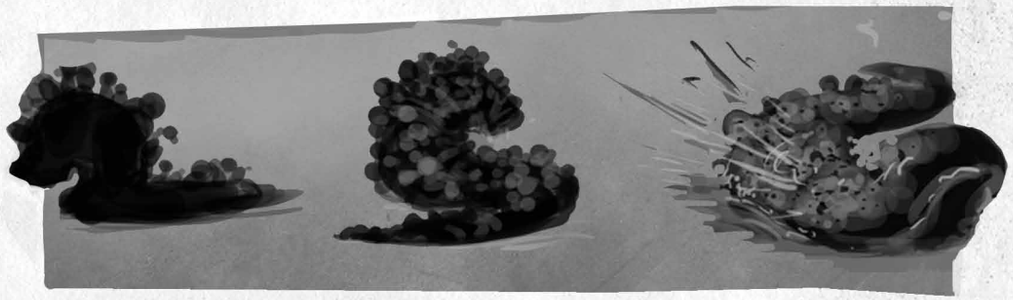








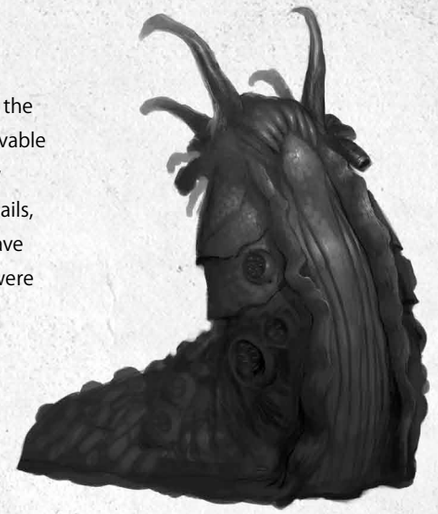






Morfu

During our research in dusty old books and on the Discovery Channel, we've seen a lot of unbelievable stuff that is actually existing. We not only drew inspiration from various sea cucumbers and snails, but also the human body, brains and innards gave some good references. All that was missing, were some vibrant colors.



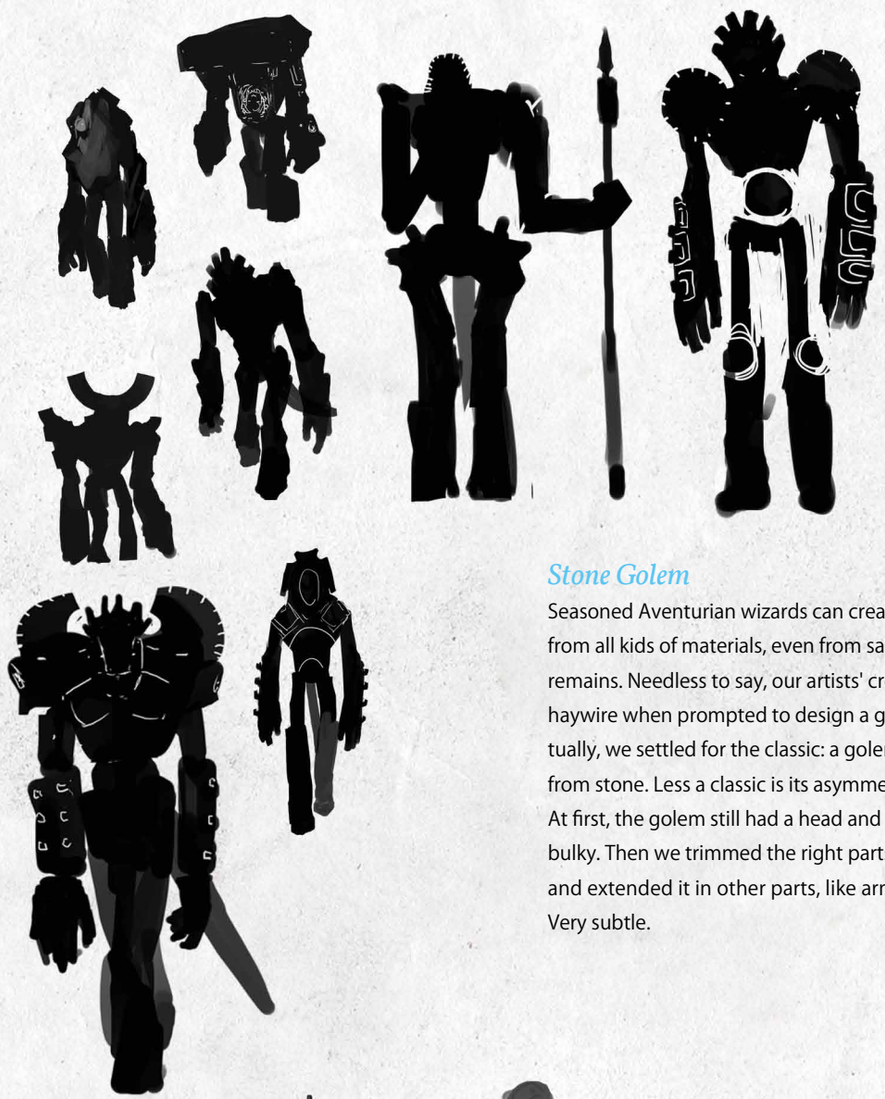


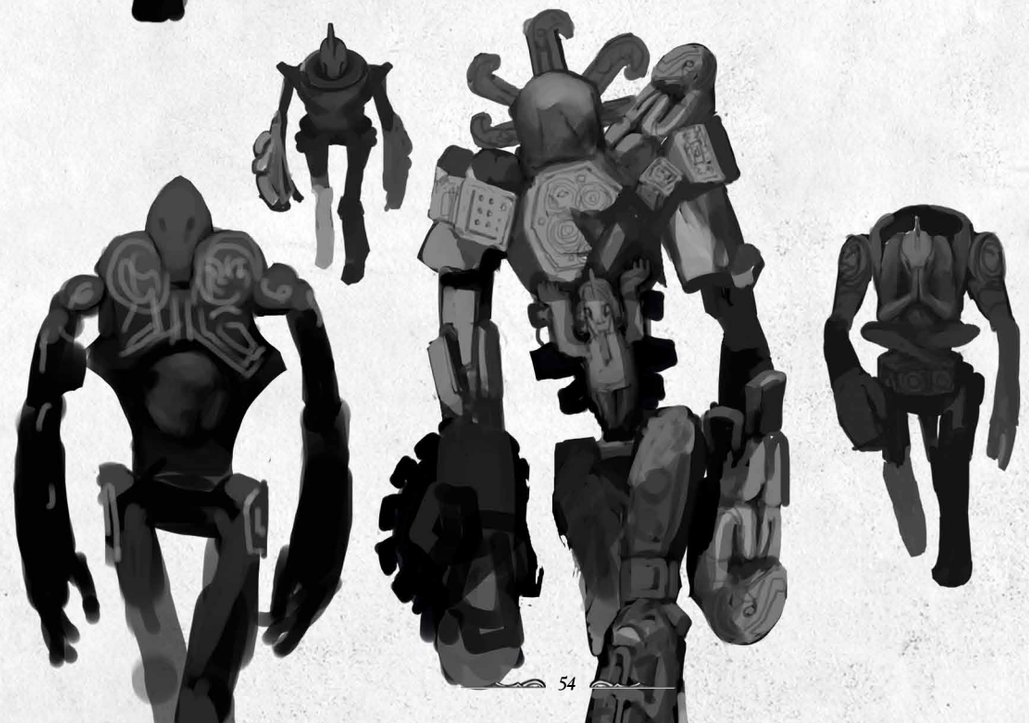












Stone Golem

Seasoned Aventurian wizards can create golems from all kids of materials, even from sand or human remains. Needless to say, our artists' creativity went haywire when prompted to design a golem. Eventually, we settled for the classic: a golem carved from stone. Less a classic is its asymmetric shape. At first, the golem still had a head and was less bulky. Then we trimmed the right parts (the head) and extended it in other parts, like arms and legs. Very subtle.





Wood Spider

Another fantasy-evergreen. Contrary to the original plan, we decided against an arachnophobia patch that would replace all spiders with cuddly critters. Arachnophobes on the team even admitted our wood spiders had a therapeutic effect on them.





Iribaarlily

This demonic plant was a challenge in regards of visuals, as well as game mechanics. Iribaar is the archdemon of deception; thus, the visible part of his treacherous plant is nothing but an alluring illusion. The original concept, where every combat turn only one part of the lily would be vulnerable, however, caused so much confusion among players that we decided to leave this feature out completely.











Jungle Tiger

The jungle tiger is pretty much just as it is described in the sourcebooks. A tiger's a tiger, after all. Doesn't give that much wiggle room and that again kind of dulls down the design process. Of course, our jungle tiger is still the most beautiful, yet fearsome jungle tiger out there.









ENVIRONMENT

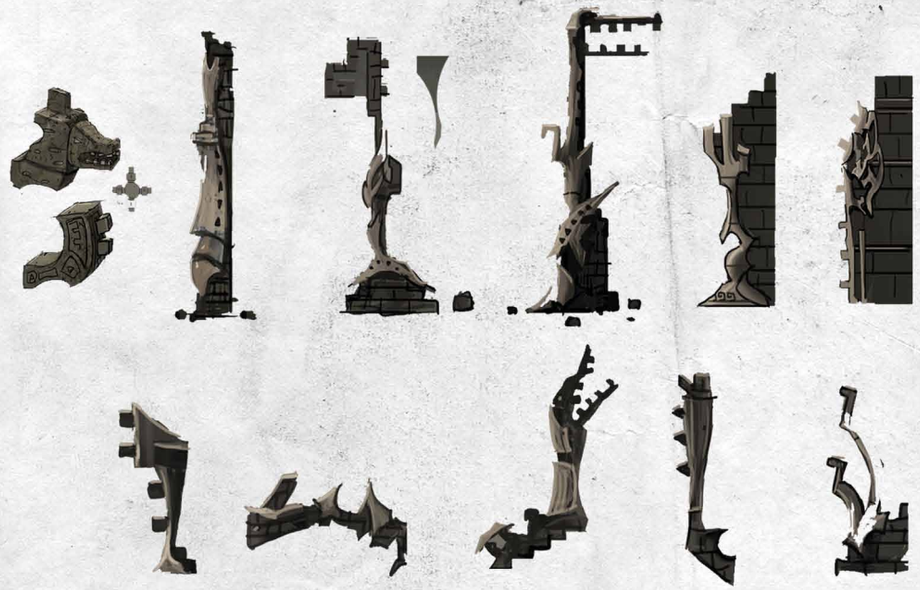




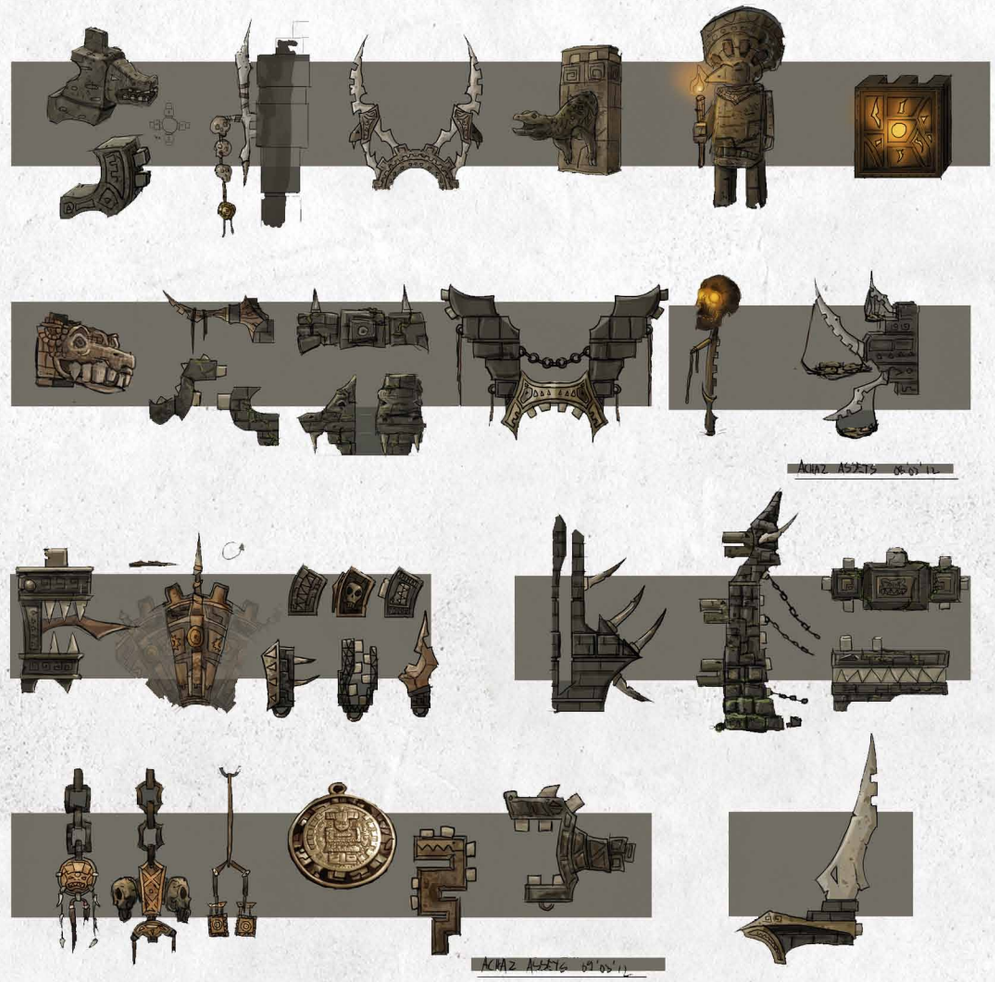
Achaz Architecture

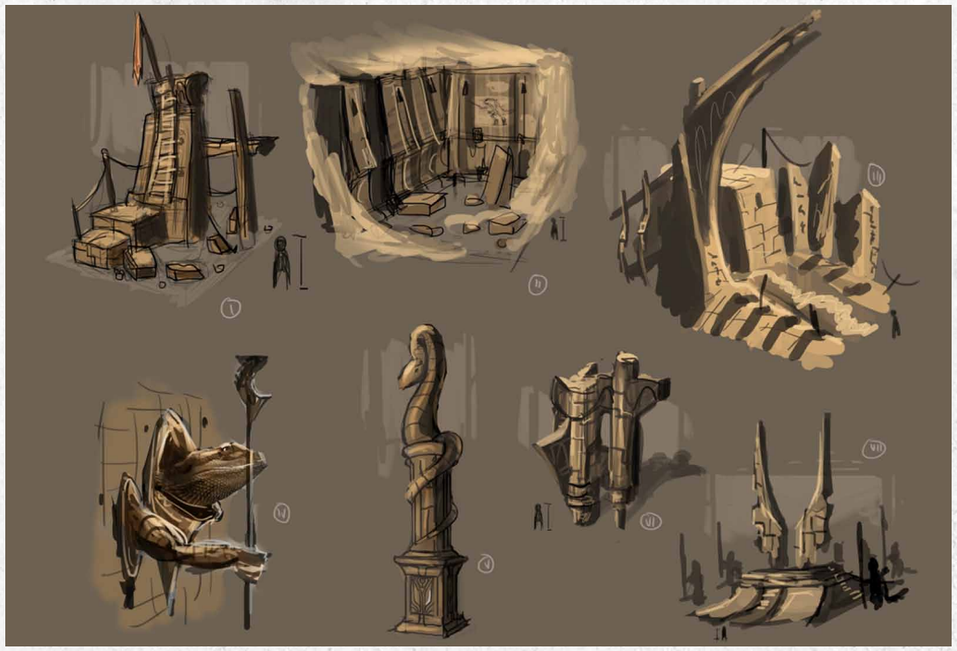
The lizard people of today live in rather primitive settlements in the swamps. There are, however, still remains of their ancient high culture scattered across the south. Art and architecture of the Achaz is based on Aztec designs. Apart from these Aztec elements we also threw in bits of very strange architecture-elements; as a reminder that what you deal with is built by a race that is alienated from human feelings and mindsets. Recurring elements in our design are abstract dragon and crocodile teeth. A display of worship towards the ancient Achaz gods. The Eternal Valley, where the cult of the Nameless God built their temple, is a long forgotten ancient Achaz city. It has been occupied and corrupted by the followers of the dark god. That's why human and Achaz elements mix in this place.

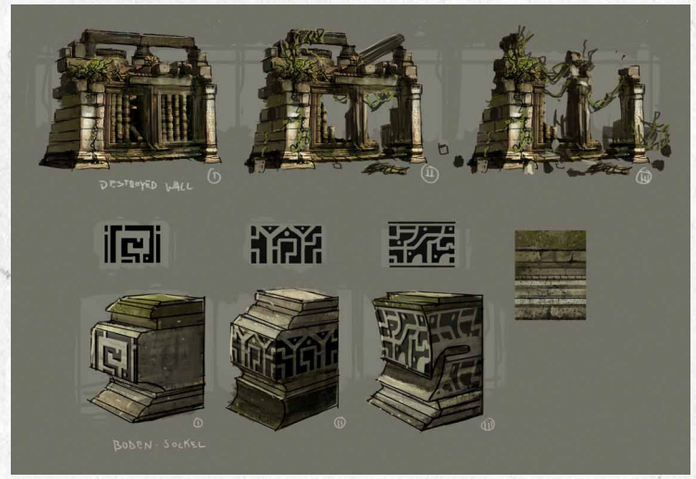






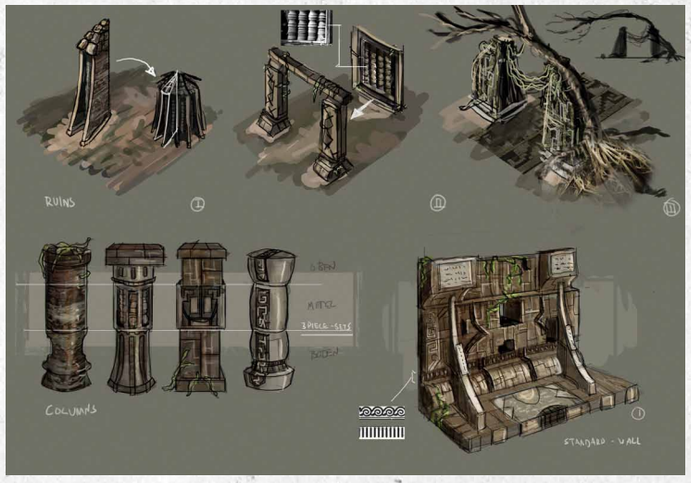


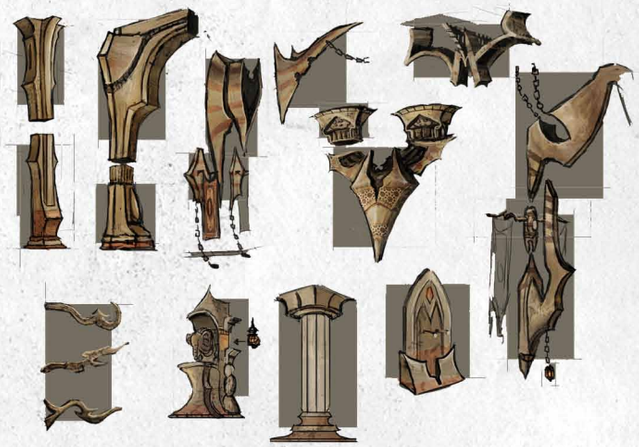



DESTROYED WALL
BODEN - SOCKEL





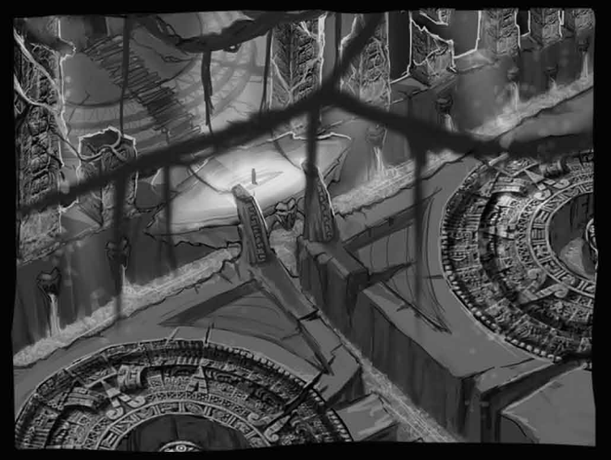

RUINS
COLUMNS
STANDARD - WALL

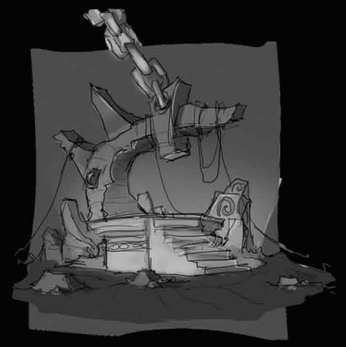






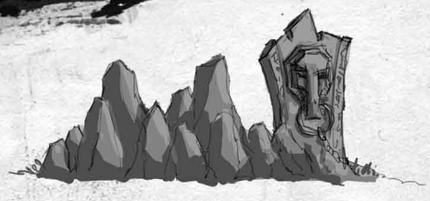


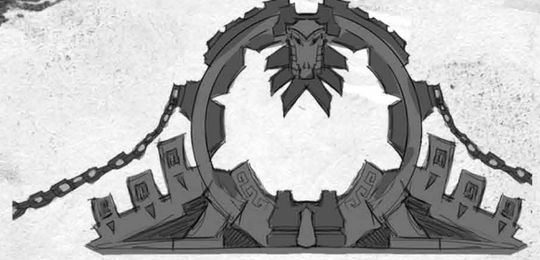


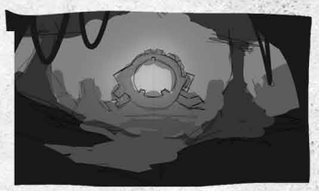
















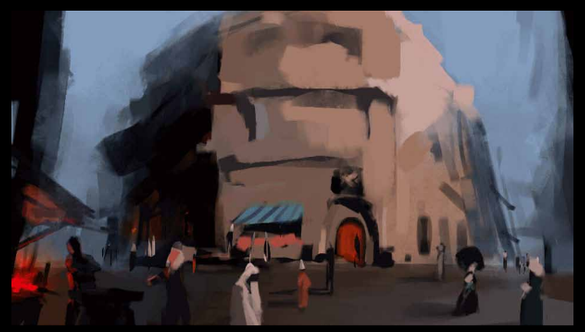


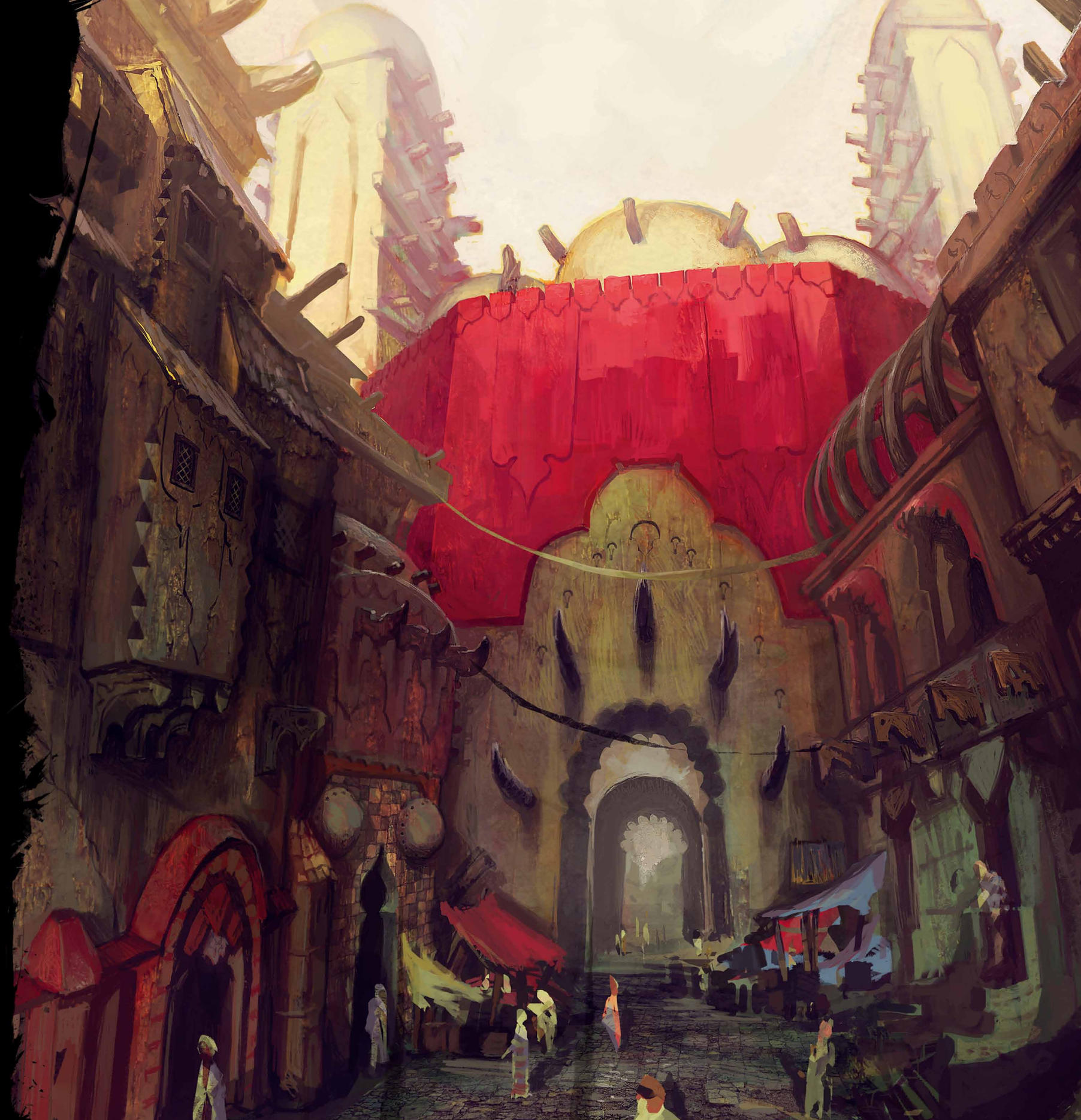




















Mengbilla

Mengbilla, city of poisoners, could be best compared to a fantasy-version of Istanbul. It's a melting pot of many different people from all kinds of cultures: Southerners, Tulamides, Horasians, and people from the Middenrealm. Here, things are tolerated that are forbidden or banned in other regions, like poison, drugs, slavery and black magic. It is a menacing city of masquerade and intrigues, where everyone ruthlessly works towards their own ends. It's quite fascinating, how diverse you can build a city, even if you got only a handful variations of rocks and wood. We had a vast modular system for creating the buildings. These single parts built the city like toy blocks. Just like everything else, the modular system came out way bigger than we planned.

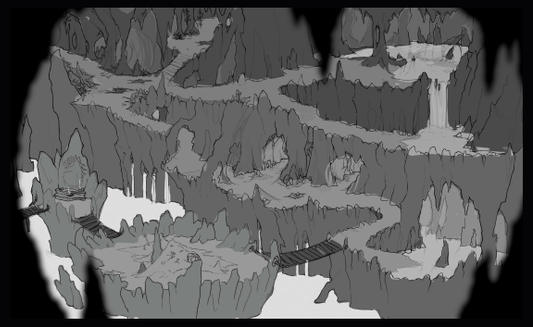
Neetha
Wobran
Vhelwan
Thenesh
Drölsash
Theniran
Dröl
Bilhén
Mikram
Chalinba
Chaleba
Morbal
Winneb
Ohzara
Istina
Dujar
Aldenia
Cuoris
Benivilla
El'Halem
Mengbilla
Festina
Lorfas
Heldenrain
Mohadorf

The World Map

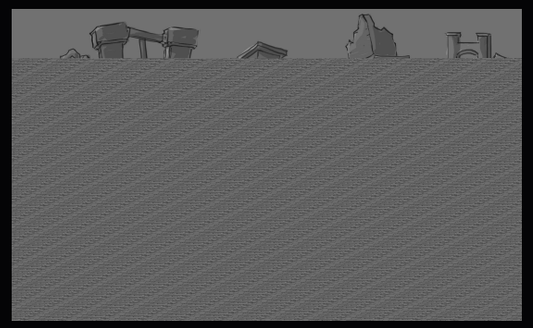
Our world map is the work of Miriam Kranz. Originally, we designed it as a 3D map . The first attempts looked really promising, but also let the wild south look like a miniature railway landscape. So we kept the map itself in 3D, but used 2d models for all the objects.







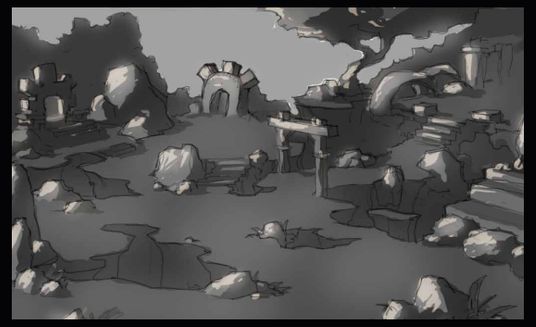






Detailmaps

We intended the detail maps to save us some time and work. We didn't want to have to create whole catacombs and graveyards, so if certain areas were connected, we illustrated that through maps with similar mechanics as the world map. Those details maps were not only supposed to be functional, but they also had to be visually appealing. That was tougher than we thought. We ditched the first try and made another attempt where we designed a map with 3D objects...which also failed. One artist after another took their shot at map design. This process was ongoing until the project's very end. By now, we've become specialists for both, maps that work and those that don't.












COMMON
ADVANCED
ELITE
AXE - CONCEPT - 13'10





Gambeson



Plate Amor



Horasian Cavalry Armor



Kuslikan Lamellar



Leather Coat









Robe



Caftan



Brigantine



Iriyan Armor



Chaincover



Gladiator



Bronze Plate



Brabakcoat









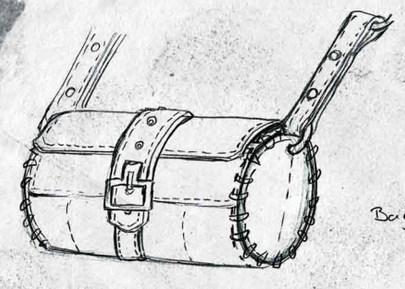











Bag


Fancy
cold Stuff
Same
as top

Belt

Wallpaper





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